

Senate Successfully Passes Legislation for Advanced Disabled Advocacy and Tax Credits

The Missouri State Senate passed Senate Bill 1144 this week, which better protects the rights of Missouri's disabled citizens. The bill, which is sponsored by Senator Jon Dolan (R-Lake St. Louis) and us, gained approval of the Senate this week. This legislation prevents fraudulent disability claims for motor vehicle parking permits, and ensures that individuals filing for a disabled tag are indeed deserving of it.

In my opinion, the large issue on this piece of legislation was that too many times a truly disabled citizen couldn't use one of the limited distinguished disabled parking spots. Senate Bill 1144 not only increases penalties for those who illegally use a disabled parking permit or license plate, but also to doctors who furnish statements of disabilities to those who do not meet state standards for a disabled parking tag.

On Tuesday, the Senate also gave first round approval to ensure that tax credits in Missouri are monitored and properly used for their intended purposes through the Tax Credit Accountability Act. The Joint Committee on Tax Policy has determined that this bill will undoubtedly increase public benefits and provide a continual review of tax credits and how they are being used each year. This is an important first step in reaching a balanced budget and demanding greater accessibility to best protect the taxpayers.

I understand and appreciate the opinions of citizens who are concerned that certain tax credits should be withheld for items such as historic preservation. This bill does not eliminate credits to those programs, but simply provides a fundamental system to monitor the credits in the future. Missouri needs to make improvements on our system of tax credits and one can see that the majority of the Senate agrees that our state needs to be more responsible when dealing with tax credits.

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